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MEMORANDUM FOR

January 17, 1980.

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE

In response to a report on Ambassador Castro's meeting with former Argentine Junta member, General Viola during which the General expressed serious concern over the State Department human rights report on Argentina (Buenos Aires 472), the President has directed that you personally approve the language of the report.

*Zbigniew Brzezinski*

Zbigniew Brzezinski

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

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Review on January 17, 1986

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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
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[REDACTED] SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 0985

USEEC

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E. O. 12065:: GDS 2/1/86 (FRIEDMAN, TOWNSEND B.) OR-P  
TAGS: SHUM AR  
SUBJECT: (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - JANUARY 26 - FEBRUARY 1,  
1980

REF: BUENOS AIRES 0772

[REDACTED] SUMMARY: THE SWEDES ARE STILL WAITING FOR A GOA  
REPLY TO STOCKHOLM'S LATEST INQUIRY INTO THE FATE OF  
DAGMAR HAGELIN. PRESS FREEDOM AND NEWSPAPER ECONOMICS  
ARE GENERATING A HEATED DEBATE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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ND NEWSPAPER OWNERS. THE OUTCOME COULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT  
EFFECT ON THE FATE OF SMALLER PAPERS, AND PERHAPS

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ULTIMATELY, ON NEWSPAPER INDEPENDENCE. THE SARAGOV  
CASE IS STILL UNDER PRESIDENTIAL REVIEW. A LIGHT,  
AND PROBABLY TRANSITORY, INCREASE IN GOA OPTION  
APPROVALS. END SUMMARY.

1. [REDACTED] THE HAGELIN CASE---

THE SWEDISH EMBASSY HAS PRIVATELY SHOWN US THE  
SWORN TESTIMONY OF NORMA SUSANA BURGOS, A MONTONERO  
AND FORMER INMATE AND TRUSTY OF THE DETENTION CENTER  
AT THE NAVAL MECHANIC'S SCHOOL (ESMA) IN BUENOS AIRES  
(STOCKHOLM 0262). THIS TESTIMONY WAS THE BASIS ON  
WHICH THE SWEDES MADE THEIR INQUIRY TO THE GOA LAST  
DECEMBER ON THE FATE OF DAGMAR HAGELIN, --- A SEVENTEEN  
YEAR OLD SWEDISH NATIONAL WHO DISAPPEARED IN JANUARY  
1977. BURGOS, A FRIEND OF HAGELIN STATES SHE SAW  
HER ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THROUGH EARLY FEBRUARY 1977,  
BUT THAT SHE WAS LATER TOLD BY AN ESMA GUARD THAT HAGELIN  
HAD BEEN "TRANSFERRED" ( THIS SLANG TERM COULD MEAN  
EITHER THAT SHE WAS EXECUTED OR SIMPLY MOVED.) BURGOS  
STATES THAT HAGELIN WAS PROBABLY TAKEN BY THE SECURITY  
FORCES WHEN THEY MISTAKENLY IDENTIFIED HER AS A MRS. BERGER,  
ONE OF BURGO'S MONTONERO ASSOCIATES WHOM HAGELIN  
ALLEGEDLY RESEMBLED. THE MOST SENSITIVE PART OF BURGOS'  
TESTIMONY IS THE IDENTIFICATION, BY NAME, OF TWO  
NAVAL OFFICERS WHO SHE SAYS WERE DIRECTLY INVOLVED  
WITH HAGELIN AT THE SCHOOL. A COPY OF THE TESTIMONY  
WAS PRESENTED TO THE GOA WHICH HAS NOT YET RESPONDED  
TO THE SWEDES' DEMARCHE. THE SWEDES' ACTIVITY IN  
BEHALF OF HAGELIN RECEIVED SOME PUBLICITY HERE  
AND THERE WERE REPORTS THAT THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR  
WOLLTER, WHO HAS BEEN REASSIGNED TO MEXICO, WAS BEING  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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WITHDRAWN FROM BUENOS AIRES AS A PROTEST GESTURE.  
THE SWEDISH EMBASSY HERE, HOWEVER, STATES THAT  
WOLLTER'S TRANSFER IS NORMAL AND UNRELATED TO THE  
HAGELIN CASE.

2. [REDACTED] PRESS FREEDOM---

THE GOA'S DECISION TO INCREASE THE TAX ON IMPORTED  
NEWSPRINT FROM 10 PERCENT TO 45 PERCENT HAS STIRRED  
AN ANGRY REACTION AMONG SMALLER AND MEDIUM SIZE  
PUBLISHERS. THE IMPORT TAX WILL FORCE PAPERS TO  
BUY THE MUCH HIGHER COST AND INFERIOR OUTPUT OF  
ARGENTINA'S ONLY NEWSPRINT MANUFACTURER, PAPER PRENSAN

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JOINTLY OWNED BY THE COUNTRY'S MOST AFFLUENT NEWSPAPERS  
--CLARIN, LA NACION, LA RAZON-- AND THE GOA. THE  
PUBLISHERS OF OTHER PAPERS FEAR THE ADDITIONAL COSTS  
OF NEWSPRINT WILL CAUSE THEM TO GO UNDER. THEY ALSO  
POINT TO THE POTENTIAL FOR MANIPULATIVE ATTACKS ON  
PRESS FREEDOM IF ALL NEWSPAPERS ARE FORCED TO RELY  
ON A MONOPOLY SOURCE FOR NEWSPRINT.  
THESE FEARS ARE REASONABLE. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT  
BELIEVE THAT THE GOA WAS MOTIVATED BASICALLY BY A

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USEEC

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

DESIRE TO INHIBIT PRESS FREEDOM. RATHER, IT WOULD  
LIKE TO SEE PAPEL PRENSA START MAKING MONEY -- A  
DESIRE NO DOUBT ENCOURAGED BY ITS PARTNERS IN THE VENTURE.  
MOREOVER, NONE OF THE LATTER WOULD BE  
UNHAPPY IF THEY PICKED UP A LARGER SHARE OF THE  
MARKET IF SOME OF THEIR SMALLER COMPETITORS WERE.

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FORCED OUT OF BUSINESS.

PRESS FREEDOM ALSO CAME UP LAST WEEK IN THE  
CONTEXT OF A RAID BY BUENOS AIRES MUNICIPAL AUTHOR-  
ITIES ON A SMALL NEWS AGENCY WHICH SERVICES PROVINCIAL  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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PAPERS. THE AUTHORITIES ALLEGED THAT THE AGENCY DID  
NOT HAVE AN OPERATING LICENSE AND CLOSED IT. THIS  
ALLEGATION WAS PROVEN FALSE AND AFTER SEVERAL DAYS --  
THE RAIDERS WERE REPORTEDLY SHOWN THE LICENSE WHEN  
THEY ARRIVED -- THE AGENCY REOPENED. THE REAL  
MOTIVATIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES IN SEEKING  
TO CLOSE THE AGENCY REMAIN UNKNOWN. HOWEVER, THE  
EASE WHICH THEY ACTED UNDERLINES THE STILL GREAT  
POTENTIAL FOR ARBITRARY USE OF POWER HERE.

DESPITE THE FOREGOING, PRESS FREEDOM HERE HAS  
BEEN CONSIDERABLY EXPANDED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL  
MONTHS. BY ALL ACCOUNTS THE HEAVY HAND OF GOVERN-  
MENT CENSORSHIP -- OR INTIMIDATION -- IS LESS FELT  
NOW THAN ANY TIME IN THE RECENT PAST: POLITICAL  
SUBJECTS, HUMAN RIGHTS TOPICS APPEAR WITH FREQUENCY.  
(WE NOTE THIS WEEK THAT LA PRENSA PUBLISHED A LONG,  
OBJECTIVE COMMENTARY ON FREEDOM HOUSE'S RECENT  
LISTING OF ARGENTINA AMONG THE "NOT FREE"; NACION  
REPORTED THAT FORMER BUENOS AIRES EDITOR ROBERT COX  
WAS GIVEN AN AWARD AS "THE BEST EDITOR OF THE YEAR"  
BY A MAJOR BRITISH T.V. COMPANY.)

. [REDACTED] SARAGОВI CASE ----

PRESIDENT VIDELA WHO IS NOW CONSIDERING WHETHER  
TO GRANT A COMMUTATION OF SENTENCE TO HORACIO OSCAR  
ARAGОВI HAS ORDERED FURTHER "CONSULTATIONS" WITH  
MILITARY AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN THE CASE, WE ARE  
TOLD. THESE CONSULTATIONS ARE SUPPOSED TO TAKE  
ABOUT TWO MORE WEEKS. THE MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENT'S  
OFFICE WHO HAS BEEN HANDLING THIS MATTER -- AND HAS  
NEEDED TAKEN AN INTENSE PERSONAL INTEREST IN SEEING  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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ITS INJUSTICE RIGHTED -- PROFESSES OPTIMISM THAT THE COMMUTATION REQUEST WILL BE DECIDED FAVORABLY. IF SO, IT WOULD BE THE FIRST SUCH COMMUTATION GRANTED BY THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT. WE LEARNED, TOO, THAT THE PRESIDENT IS NOW CONSIDERING TWO OTHER CASES WHICH, IN THE VIEW OF HIS STAFF MEMBER, ALSO MERIT COMMUTATION.

7. [REDACTED] OPTION PROGRAM ----

DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY NINE PEN DETAINEES HOLDING U.S. OPTION CERTIFICATES WERE APPROVED FOR TRAVEL TO THE U.S. BY THE GOA, FAR IN EXCESS OF THE AVERAGE MONTHLY RATE OF THREE WE HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCING. ONE ELEMENT IN THE INCREASE WAS THE ABNORMALLY LARGE NUMBER OF PEN DETAINEES HOLDING OUR CERTIFICATE OF APPROVALS THAT WERE CONSIDERED FOR OPTION BY THE GOA IN JANUARY (22 VERSUS THE NORMAL MONTHLY RATE OF 10). WE HAVE NO INFORMATION TO SUGGEST THAT THIS UPSURGE CONSTITUTES A CHANGE IN GOA POLICY ON THE OPTIONS PROGRAM. A CHECK WITH OTHER EMBASSIES, FOR EXAMPLE, SHOWS NO PATTERN OF UPSURGE WITH GOA APPROVALS DURING THE MONTH. MORE IMPORTANTLY, AS WE NOTED LAST WEEK, THE GOA VIEWS THE OPTION PROGRAM WITH HEIGHTENED RESERVE, CONVINCED THAT IT HAS BEEN USED BY TERRORISTS TO GET OUT OF DETENTION AND RETURN TO THE ATTACK IN ARGENTINA.  
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